NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NORTHEASTERN OHIO
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ON THE FRINGE

Volume 1 October, 1983 No. 8

OCTOBER 8: Field trip. Stumpy Basin. Leader: Dr. Barbara Andreas. This will be a half-day field trip. Meet at 9;00 a.m. in the parking lot of the Peninsula Night Club in downtown Peninsula, Ohio. Take 271S to Rt. 303. Follow signs west on Rt. 303 to Peninsula. Please refer to "Stumpy Basin Field Trip" in this month's newsletter.

OCTOBER 27: "Non-Vascular Plants in Northeastern Ohio" by Dr. Susan Munch. Dr. Munch received her PhD in botany from the University of Washington, Seattle, and she is currently assistant Professor of Biology at Hiram College. Dr. Munch's lecture will present an overview of the mosses, liverworts and lichens found in northeastern Ohio. Included will be slides and live specimens with magnifying equipment for easier viewing of this tiny plant kingdom. Meet at the Corning Building of the Holden Arboretum at 7:30 p.m.

Watch the November newsletter for the upcoming November Annual Meeting. This is the time to cast your vote for next year's officers and members-at-large. Your appearance is necessary.

STUMPY BASIN FIELD TRIP

Stumpy Basin is a unique natural area located in Peninsula, Ohio. This highly diversified natural area comprises approximately one hundred acres and has a species total approaching six hundred. The area has a well developed oak community on the dry ridges above the basin, a large slumping basin, and a cat-tail marsh at the base of the slope.

Disturbance can often bear negative connotations for natural areas. Disturbance can often set back succession, however, slumps and slips are created and maintained by disturbance. Stumpy Basin was created by massive disturbance. The area served as a "borrow pit" for highway construction. The removal of fill dirt for the highway left a very disturbed area with an abundance of exposed alkaline glacial deposits which make up the slip. As a result slips become "islands of alkalinity" surrounded by habitats having more acidic soils. Alkaline soils account for the prairie species and other lime-loving plants that are associated with slips.

Slips are unique habitats in northeastern Ohio. They are also steep, often wet, and slippery. The chance to visit this protected natural area is a great opportunity to see several members of the Gentian family and many other plant species.

Dr. Barbara Andreas is one of the best field botanists in the state and will most definitely provide us all with a very informative field trip.

Brian Parsons



Stars of the Late Show

by Tom Yates, Horticulturist
The Holden Arboretum

The real "stars" of the late season wildflower garden and roadside shows are the asters, who's name means "star" in Greek. Their individual daisies resemble beautiful stars, but the full value of asters is in their profusion of bloom. Star clusters of varied heights, flower size and color dominate our autumnal wildflower display.

Asters are members of the Asteraceae (Compositae) family. The daisy-like inflorescence is a radiate head of yellow disk flowers and colorful ray flowers. Both flower type produce seed, which is an achene with a silky pappus (the parachute that aids in wind dispersal). The plants are herbaceous perennials, with alternate, simple and usually narrow leaves. A shallow spreading system of rhizomes bears the roots and shoots.

The asters form a large genus most strongly represented in North America but also present in Europe and Asia.

Garden asters or "Michaelmas Daisies" are derived mainly from the New England Aster (Aster novae-angliae) and the New York Aster (Aster novi-belgi) both natives, but the breeding work was done mainly in England. The numerous named varieties listed by growers and their popularity with flower gardeners attest to the usefulness and ease of culture in the aster group.

Wild asters respond nicely to good cultural practices. Most will do well in full sun or partial shade. For bigger better bloom, grow them in moist soil, organically enriched with composted cow manure or similar material. Keep them weeded. Established plants send up so many shoots in spring that it is best to thin them out. The remaining ones should grow better. Tall asters can be made to finish shorter if the shoots are pinched back in early summer. Staking may be necessary on tall types if not

grown with their usual companions--other asters, goldenrods, etc. Asters may be dug and divided in fall or early spring--replant the outer parts of the clump. Some native asters are troubled by powdery mildew which disfigures their leaves. This can be controlled with a fungicide, such as ferbam or benlate. If aphids become a problem, use a contact insecticide or share your plants with them. Asters can be propagated by seed, sown in early spring which has been moist-cold stratified for sixty days. Vegetative propagation is extremely easy since rhizome pieces will root in spring or fall. This division of the clump produces plants identical to the original. This is useful for special plants.

With the ground rules established, we will move on to more specific information. Ohio has many species, all of which can likely be cultivated but listed are some of the better garden subjects native to northeast Ohio:

Aster novae-angliae; New England Aster. This is the super-star. 1-7 feet. It's large, rich purple flowers bloom in abundance for much of the aster season. Plants are strong growing and almost pest free. A search where it grows in numbers, will often turn up a rose-pink color form. There are reports of white flowers, but certainly not commonly found. Grow the New England Aster with yellow goldenrods, the small flowered white asters and other violet asters or grow as a specimen at the rear of the perennial bed. Staking may be necessary and should be done long before flowering.

Aster puniceus; Purple-stemmed or Swamp Aster. Another tall, blue-violet aster. At 2-8 feet, perhaps too tall. The flowers are not usually as vibrant as the previous species, but they do begin in August and make masses of color mid-season. This aster requires wet soil, so plant it in your backyard swamp or in a large ditch.

Aster laevis; Smooth Aster. A small plant at 1-4 feet and it's flowers are smaller than the two previous species. The rays are violet. It grows on slumps in our area, but will be accommodated in garden conditions and open woods.

Aster preaeltus; Willow Aster. Of moderate size, 2-5 feet. This aster has small heads, but large numbers of showy violet ray flowers. Plant in moist

open areas.

Aster umbellatus; Flat-Topped Aster. Another tall plant at 2-8 feet with creamy white heads in a distinct flat cluster. Excellent in a moist garden. Good companion to Joe-Pye weed and boneset.

Aster macrophyllus; Large-leaved Aster. 1-4 feet. The medium sized heads are usually violet, but can also be white. The plant has large basal leaves. Best suited to part-day sun at woodland edges. Moderate flower heads are showy especially in mass plantings. Common in dry woods.

Aster Schreberi; Schreber's Aster. Similar in most ways to previous specie but the flower heads are white and grow better in a moist site.

Aster preanthoides; Crooked-stemmed Aster or Purple Drift (an old but fitting name). It covers itself with pale blue-violet stars. 1-3 feet tall with moderate flower heads. Stems zig-zag between leaf nodes. Disk flowers yellow, darkening to purple. Grow in moist soil.

Aster lateriflorus; Calico or Starved Aster. Moderate at 1-4 feet with numerous small white flower heads--sometimes purple, disk purple. Grow anywhere in sun.

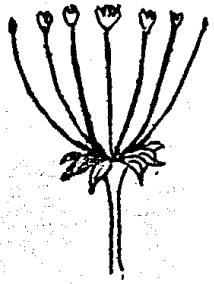
Aster pilosus; Small White Aster. 1-5 feet with numerous small white flowers. Grows on roadsides and banks. This and the previous plant and several other species of small white asters were at one time called "Frostweeds" because the masses of small white flowers resemble hoar-frost.

Asters are easy to grow and propagate. They are varied in habit and hue. They fit well into the perennial garden or into a naturalized planting. A plant of special merit. Give them a try.

Corymb--A flat-topped or convex-topped flower cluster with pedicels or rays arising from different points on the axis (the outer pedicels being longer than those close to the axis), with its progression of flowering from the margin inwards.



Cyme--A convex or flattened cluster of which the central flowers unfold first, and with its progression of flowering from the center outwards.



COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

On Wednesday, September 21st, an Executive Board meeting was held to discuss the direction the Society would take for the next year. One of the main points was how many programs and field trips to schedule since most programs had only modest attendance and field trips rarely had more than five or six in attendance. Also, this year most of the speakers donated their time and we cannot expect that next year. It was decided that the incoming program chairman will work out whatever he thinks best in terms of availability of speakers and leaders, budget and member's interest. It is hoped that a complete schedule of the year's activities will be in the hands of all members in January so your calendars can be marked.

The newsletter will, in all probability, be issued six times next year, or bi-monthly. This was decided in order to lessen the load on the editor and cut back on mailing and printing costs. However, it is hoped that we will be able to increase the content of each newsletter.

After considerable debate, it was voted to keep the dues structure as it is now. I, personally think that this is a mistake, because I do not think we can remain financially sound that way. Many of the expenses of the Society were absorbed by members of the Board, because they simply did not tender their expenses for repayment. This policy can no longer go on. We also received some handsome donations and we cannot count on that to reoccur.

We will be remaining under the umbrella of The Arboretum next year, but in the meantime we have completed all the paperwork to get our Charter from the State, and are pursuing the tax exemption status from the Federal Government.

The most important item of the evening was the reshaping of the Executive Board. Since committees were added, Constitutional changes will be required and are printed for your perusal in this newsletter. The vote will be taken at the October 27th meeting, so please read carefully and attend that meeting.

In addition, the nominating committee of Jack Selby, Laurel Giblock and Phyllis Leonetti will announce the slate at the October meeting. The election will be held at the November Annual Meeting and nominations may be made from the floor at that time.

So you see that the next two meetings are of great importance to all of the members and it is hoped that you will try to be there. We have a great speaker for October on a subject that most of us are interested in. Mark your calendar.

Ann Malmquist

THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION WERE CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD AND WILL BE PRESENTED TO OUR MEMBERSHIP AT THE OCTOBER MEETING. PLEASE BE PREPARED TO VOTE.

ARTICLE IV: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors shall be composed of thirteen (13) members of the Society. The President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, as well as the immediate past President and the Chairmen of the six (6) standing committees are automatically members of the Board of Directors. (the Vice-President shall serve as Chairman of the Program/Field Trip Committee). Two members-at-large will also be elected to the Board. A representative of the sponsoring organization may be an additional member of the Board.

ARTICLE V: ELECTIONS

In September of each year, the President shall appoint from the voting membership, outside the Board, a Nominating Committee of three (3) persons, who, at the October meeting shall announce the slate of officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) and two members-at-large, for election at the Annual Meeting in November. At the Annual Meeting, nominations may also be made from the floor.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS

The officers of the Society shall consist of the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary and the Treasurer. They shall be elected at the Annual Meeting in November, along with the two members-at-large, and their term of office shall commence at the time of their election.

ARTICLE VIII: COMMITTEES

Standing Committees shall be:
- Program and Field Trips
- Newsletter
- Membership and Volunteers
- Education and Special Projects
- Fund Raising and Public Relations
- Hospitality
- Publicity

The President may appoint as many other special committees as necessary to conduct the affairs of the Society properly.

Sponsored by the Holden Arboretum

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EDITOR'S CORNER

The nominating committee has been busy putting together a roster for the November elections, the Board has been boggled with decisions on article changes and operational adjustments.

The next two months will be of significant importance to our Society.

Our viability will depend on a good, strong working core and a concerned and involved membership.

I urge all of our members to attend these meetings and offer if nothing more, your vote of confidence.

Larry Giblock